

## Global Dimensions of Schooling: Implications for Internationalizing Teacher Education

By Amy Roberts

*My grandmother was the one who first took me to the ocean. One of her daughters had managed to get a permanent husband, and he worked in Gibara [Cuba], the seaport closest to our hometown. We went to Gibara. My grandmother, who was already sixty, and the rest of my family, had never seen the ocean, although it was only twenty or thirty miles from where we lived. I remember that once my Aunt Carolina came to my grandmother's house crying and saying, "Do you realize what it means that I am forty years old and have never seen the ocean? I will soon die of old age without ever having seen it." (Arenas, 1993, p. 28)*

World dilemmas such as poverty, immigration, globalization, technology, transportation, and transnational endeavors define the notion of *global village* in the same way that multicultural populations present in all nations are described. No longer are nations as homogeneous as they were even a decade ago. In classroom settings the study of international education is similar to teaching with a multicultural perspective in terms of an emphasis on inclusiveness of diverse populations and world justice issues. Ideally both areas of study are woven throughout curriculum and highlighted in specific lessons. Yet, key distinctions separate international education from multicultural education. As a field of study international education binds key theories, values, and events so that a foundation of global dilemmas is manifested as an action on the world.

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Gutek (1993) argues that efforts to internationalize teacher education are aligned with interconnections of education such as global economics, multicultural issues, national security, and the rise of regionalism. He contends that broadening the view of citizenship supports a sense of advocacy in prospective teachers to work for environmental protection laws and their enforcement. In this context ecological problems become education dilemmas which can be utilized as a focus of study to contemplate solutions. Wilson (1993) echoes this stance by emphasizing that changes at all levels of education must occur if K-12 students are expected to learn about global dilemmas and equitable solutions.

Others contend that there are overwhelming factors against realizing internationalization in teacher education. Tye (1992) argues that individuals, alarmed by the idea of a global perspective, regard efforts to integrate international education in K-16 curriculum as a threat to national unity. In the academic arena critics maintain that international education scholars seek to indoctrinate students in a new world order advocating pacifism, moral relativism, opposition to nationalism via free-market economics, and redistribution of wealth to Third World nations (Sutton, 1999). Comparatively, Langton (1990) believes that modern life cannot be separated from local, national, and global struggles that detract from healthy lifestyles and habits. Such conditions, notes Langton, contribute to an apathy and consumerism that numbs the general United States population and induce a sense of helplessness for world and national issues beyond immediate surroundings.

These competing perspectives reflect an increasing concern that the United States education system is not adequately preparing K-16 students for a foundation of the world's cultures, economies, and political relationships (Asia Society, 2001). Although much has been written about the need to merge global perspectives in education, few scholars and practitioners have conceptualized how to integrate the study of international education as a curricular focus (Cummings, 2001). In the following article leading discussions and literature are presented in an attempt to identify the needs, challenges, and priorities of internationalizing teacher education. Four themes are offered: (1) International Education in Teacher Education: Rationale and Definition; (2) Internationalizing an Interdisciplinary Knowledge Base; (3) Global Networking: Concepts and Practice; and (4) International Student Teaching Options: Themes and Insights.

### **International Education in Teacher Education:**

#### **Rationale and Definition**

Through my work as a teacher-educator I often integrate strategies and content knowledge in which to develop and/or extend consciousness and solidity on international dilemmas. Within this context I have observed pre-service teachers' unwillingness to acknowledge that as citizens of the United States they are over-privileged, even though they may grant that others, in impoverished countries are

disadvantaged. For instance, while pre-service teachers may acknowledge that globalization has winners and losers they often proclaim the benefits are far greater than the deficits. Though receiving relevant information on global dilemmas from mass media, they act inappropriately without recognizing inconsistencies. Pre-service teachers are generally eager in efforts to unite for the improvement of equity in the national society, the academy, and school setting; yet, they can't or won't support the idea of lessening first world privilege extended to them as middle class citizens of the United States.

While half of the world's population lives on less than two dollars a day (Aristide, 2002), first world privilege in the United States remains an invisible bundle of unearned assets that can be cashed in on a daily basis without recipients' accountability and visibility for actions that support hidden systems of advantage. Denials in the form of taboos surround the subject of advantages that people gain from those disadvantaged in Third World countries. Within the political arena silences and denials surrounding privilege serves to protect unearned advantage and conferred dominance. The aura of the general population is oftentimes manifested in pre-service teachers' statements and questions such as, "We need to take care of problems like homelessness within our own state and country, so why are you focusing on people, education, and these conditions in other countries?" The line of reasoning exemplified by this question conforms to a body of denials that insulate first world privilege from becoming fully acknowledged or lessened. As a consequence, first world privilege is associated with an illusion of meritocracy, the myth that choice is equally available to all people.

First world privilege is likened to a set of selected provisions such as credit cards, a passport that ensures access and limits the humiliation of airport immigration checkpoints, United States dollars, clothes, up to date computer mediated technology, and blank checks. Disapproving of these assets does not effect change. Rather unseen dimensions must be acknowledged in order to bring about transformation. Identifying first world privilege creates accountability and revealing it publicizes questions such as, "Having described it, what actions are required to lessen or end it?" Probing questions generated by a foundation of world dilemmas, as opposed to reliance on intuition, raise consciousness on the perquisites of privilege. As a result active forms of oppression that are easily maintained when dominant groups are conditioned not to detect them are revealed.

Given the option, it is an open question whether the general population of pre-service educators would choose to use unearned assets to weaken hidden systems of advantage, and to use arbitrarily awarded privilege to reconstruct power systems on a global scale. Perhaps this is due in part to a limited understanding for issues outside the United States regarding the world's cultures, histories, economies, and political relationships. Seminal studies of teacher preparation (Haakenson, Savukova, & Mason, 1999; Sutton, 1999; Merryfield, 1991) indicate that few prospective teachers are exposed to international content either in university-required courses

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or in professional development tracks of education, and very few take foreign language classes. Nationwide rates of participation in study abroad programs are low for education majors (Hayward, 2000).

Professional development programs are called to prepare pre-service teachers for classroom conditions that embody explicit projects in relation to international conditions. Case (1993, p. 318) proposes that, “teachers themselves must gain knowledge of the world and perceptual understanding, a process that involves open-mindedness, anticipation of complexity, resistance to stereotyping, inclination to empathize, and nonchauvinism. This foundation requires ability to articulate the essential tenets and utility of international education as an area of study. Yet within university settings there is little consensus in definition of the field (Barrow, 2000).

International education is not a set of cultural activities, informational materials, or approaches. Nor should its boundaries be defined in alignment with those of multicultural education and/or global education. These areas of study overlap in goals to develop multiple perspectives, intercultural competence, respect for human rights, and to contest discrimination (Bennett, 1994). Beyond these shared aims, international education strives to embody knowledge, skills, and experiences that stem from in-depth study, work, and collaboration with groups and individuals in other countries and with international students and scholars in United States institutions.

As a discipline international education infers the study of educational, socio-political, economic, and environmental endeavors by globally oriented individuals worldwide (Roberts, 1999). It involves individuals participating in discourse that is sparked by the respectful study of relevant issues to the lives of people; yet ones in which participants retain autonomy and recognition for their particular country contexts and institutions. This focus prompts the integration of ideas across national boundaries and fosters interdisciplinary studies of global significance that are high priority for K-16 education. At the core of all contemporary international education endeavors are two concepts, interdependence and consciousness perspective. Collectively these concepts are central to the work of international educators and for serious and continuous attention within academic programs to prepare globally literate students.

Interdependency as a guiding concept is utilized to examine the plethora of national conditions that have become transnational dilemmas. A host of transnational problems, such as disposal and regulation of nuclear weapons, global environmental pollution, shortages of natural resources, and a rapidly emerging interdependent world economy, have in one way or another transformed the lives of almost everyone. The metaphor of a line of dominos represents contemporary global challenges and the significance of interdependency in terms of the connectedness of causes and effects. Tap the line of dominos anywhere, even lightly, and the entire line is affected. Similarly, if one national problem is

touched, its connectiveness or interdependence with other dilemmas, from the local to the global, is realized.

The utility of interdependency lends itself to consciousness and solidarity for transnational issues that extend beyond the education arena:

The Kamchatka Peninsula was once a Cold War listening post, used by Russia to spy on Alaska. Geographically remote and sealed off for 65 years, the landscape is without dams, logging or agriculture. A group of American conservationists seized on this wilderness a decade ago to set up a Russian-American partnership called the Wild Salmon Center. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the bottom fell out for funding research, says Guido Rahr, president of the Wild Salmon Center. "We approached the Russians and said, 'Listen, if you take us to these rivers and let us catch and release these fish, we'll support your science.'" After years of heading up restoration efforts in the Pacific Northwest that were to little and too late, he's now focused on rivers that he believes can still be saved. "What I hear a lot is, 'We need to restore our own fish, why are you going all the way over to Russia to help them with their fish?,' says Rahr." The bottom line is, if you really want to win, you want something to be here in 10,000 years, you've got to think way beyond our national border; you have to think at a global level. We've got to protect and restore our own backyards, that's for sure, but we've gotta get ahead of the extinction curve of those last places while we still can. (Arnold, 2003)

In the United States, rivers have been in decline for more than a hundred years due in part to the effect of dams, irrigation projects and hatcheries. On the Kamchatka Peninsula, Rahr's United States organization combines sport fishing with research, involving fishermen and scientists who study and preserve one of the world's few remaining bodies of wild salmon, steelhead and char. They are dedicated to protecting the area, regardless of its location in the world.

Within the education arena the utility of interdependency conceptualizes effective models and measures for reaching children and reforming schools. In this line of reasoning the purpose of studying education systems is not to rank schools and place them in competition with each other. Rather alliance is formed between educators to study global forces impinging upon respective systems. Local responses are framed with respect to particular country contexts. As well, the idea that access to equal and equitable education extends beyond national boundaries as a right of all children is respected and consequently, hegemony of individual nations is discouraged. Interdependency calls attention to the idea that while systems around the world confront problems, the resolutions proposed by transnational organizations such as the World Bank or UNESCO are not always viable. Rather, solutions that are incorporated from a top down perspective oftentimes lead to inequitable consequences and counter productivity.

The viability of consciousness perspective is also realized through investigations of global dilemmas and challenges. As a concept, consciousness perspective represents a knowledge base, skills, and attitudes attuned to viewing issues on a global level while appreciating the mosaic of cultures in the immediate neighbor-

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hood, town, or city. Consciousness perspective is utilized as a lens to recognize issues through other systems in terms of ways of living, contrasting worldviews, habits, and traditions. In this respect its utility as an instructional aid is to inform and mediate the study of global dilemmas.

#### **Internationalizing an Interdisciplinary Knowledge Base**

Teacher education programs can and should assume leadership roles to facilitate integration of international education issues, practices, and concerns in K-16 curriculum. Faculty and their education students who are purposeful in a foundation of international education are key agents for implementing and effecting change. Initiatives as exemplified by the Global Awareness Project of Florida International University and the Professional Development School Project of Ohio State University are promising. These institutions have established teacher education programs with a strong focus in international education (Merryfield 1992; Tucker & Cistone 1991). In Wisconsin international education efforts have been extended through state legislation, new programs, teacher institutes, and a guide to curriculum planning in global studies. The Stanford University International Studies Project provides international studies centers for curriculum and staff development statewide.

A national snapshot of internationalization in teacher education suggests that the programs described above are the exception rather than the norm. Teacher education programs face dilemmas stemming from lack of information, experience, and resources for planning and implementing sustainable international options. Programming responsibilities are generally assigned to administrative offices in departments of languages, literature, and international studies, rather than to faculty in teacher education (Hayward, 2000).

Oftentimes purposeful ideas and direction are layered in various decision making institutions as exemplified by a key policy address by former United States Secretary of Education, Rod Paige. While in office Paige outlined the Department of Education's long term goals for international education:

No longer can we afford to focus only on the domestic. Our view must turn more outward toward the world, nurturing relationships with other countries and improving international studies in our schools... to meet our goal to leave no child behind, we must shift our focus from current practice and encourage programs that introduce our students to international studies earlier in their education, starting in kindergarten. (Paige, 2002, p 2-3)

This position broadens the Department's focus to include collaboration with school systems worldwide and to engage actively in international projects, comparative studies, and sharing of education policies and programs. Paige juxtaposed this position as a complement to existing efforts to improve national reading and math scores. He pledged to seek legislative authority to support inclusion of international education as an area of study in public schools through partnership with colleges and universities.

According to a survey by the American Council on Education (2000), 90 percent of adults in the United States believe it is important for children and young people to have a strong understanding of international issues. The federal *No Child Left Behind* Act places unprecedented pressure on schools to reevaluate teaching and learning processes. The spotlight on student achievement in reading and math minimizes commitment and emphasis of other key curricular areas. International education, Paige stressed would not be another demand on established curriculum or viewed as an add-on, but rather a content area for integration with core subjects and existing standards and assessments.

Infusing a meaningful and effective foundation of international education at the K-12 levels requires a commitment from teacher education programs nationwide. Teacher educators are charged with providing direction for innovative curriculum changes and modifications. Those who collaborate with colleagues in various disciplines to identify academic coursework in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences support this premise with an interdisciplinary knowledge base of teacher education curriculum. Ideally key issues of international education should filter through curriculum beyond social studies or comparative education courses. A focus on current world events, as a strand of study, serves as a viable means for internationalizing education coursework. Current events of world economic, social, and political issues are key problematic areas that engage the utility of consciousness perspective (Diaz, Massialas, Bryron & Xanthopoulos, 1999).

World issues can be connected and woven into a curricular framework from a vast array of sources in both university studies requirements and professional development courses. As identified by the National Council for the Social Studies (1994) world environmental issues are one of the more important salient global dilemmas. Acknowledgment of the centrality and importance of the concept of sustainable development is the hallmark of international issues in the twenty-first century. A key element in changing attitudes and behaviors toward the environment is providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to construct relevant knowledge that is powerful when translated into appropriate actions and positive values.

The ability to maximize connections to meaningful ideas about world events affecting people differently depending upon their location and sense of place in the world requires a foundation of world history and geography. The absence of this foundation oftentimes leads to disinterest or limited interpretation of current events on superficial levels. General education requirements for courses in State and United States history ensure a collection of historical and geographical facts to guide social studies planning in elementary classroom settings and meet certification requirements. Beyond this the curriculum should include either university studies requirements and/or professional development courses in world history and geography.

A foundation of world events and dilemmas also necessitates examination of the complexity of globalization and citizenship responsibilities. Prospective teachers who aspire to become effective educators in a pluralistic and interdependent world

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require a foundation of the meaning and consequences of globalization. In this line of reasoning, the preparation of students at all levels for effective citizenship becomes a major concern of educators. While citizenship education involves the basic concepts and values underlying the democratic community and constitutional order of the United States (Butts 1988), it should also incorporate recognition that citizens are residents of an interdependent planet. This premise requires civic attention and action of a national as well as transnational magnitude (Boulding, 1988).

### **Global Networking: Concepts and Practice**

The use of technology as a tool to create global networks is not a novel idea. During 1924 in Southern France, Célestin Freinet and a colleague initiated an exchange between classrooms that transformed their teaching and paved the way for the founding of the Modern School Movement (Cummins & Sayers, 1995). Their students exchanged essays, photographs, and maps between sites. Networking between classrooms was not driven by technology, but rather by teaching practices that were tested and refined through decades of collaboration and reflection. New technologies such as printing presses were employed as they became available. At Freinet's death in 1966 the original network had grown to include more than 10,000 schools in 33 nations (Cummins & Sayers, 1995).

The continued and expanded efforts of global networking through computer technology exemplify the legacy of Freinet and the Modern School Movement. Contact between groups, however, has never automatically led to intercultural competence nor to the development of meaningful interactions between students separated by region or nation (Coleman, 1998; Fischer, 1998). Kern (1998) contends that this is also the case for virtual interactions in a global arena. Despite the plethora of descriptive reports regarding electronic learning projects, what students actually gain from interaction in global environments mediated by Internet technology is still contested (Roberts, 2004).

Many studies have examined affective goals such as intercultural learning and competence as guiding frameworks of virtual exchanges between university students (Cummins & Sayers, 1995; Donath & Volkmer, 1997; Meagher & Castaños, 1996; Warschauer & Kern, 2000). Oftentimes these goals are ineffective, both for individual participants and for contributions to global competency. Participant emotions and personal opinions can be utilized to initiate serious inquiry grounded in content. However, changing attitudes and behaviors toward world issues is complemented by opportunities to construct relevant knowledge based on conceptual understanding. Learning in this context translates to helping students appropriate a culture of reason, analysis, and reflection, based on a shared foundation of content as well as ideas.

A vast array of computer networking resources is available to support global projects based on serious scholarship. The International Education and Resource Network (I\*EARN), a non-profit international telecommunications network in 21

countries enables participants to collaborate efforts on projects that make meaningful differences in the world. The Institute for Global Communications (IGC) provides computer networking tools for international communications and information exchange, including EcoNet, PeaceNet, and ConflictNet. These resources highlight the study of topics that may generate emotion and controversy when global dilemmas are presented. Beyond this they are aligned with content based topics that emphasize participant involvement, simulations, and literature discussions.

In the United States education system the utility of inquiry strategies to provide students with meaningful learning experiences are among the oldest and best of teaching techniques. These strategies are also viable in virtual communities of instructors and students who collaborate across national boundaries to investigate global dilemmas (Roberts, 2004). The aim of helping students recognize that there is commonality to global issues lays the groundwork for developing attitudes of solidarity and for the recognition of patterns in world dilemmas that can be conceptualized within immediate communities and nations. In this respect reliance on models of shared understanding are useful to ensure ongoing collaboration.

One of the principal aims of virtual exchanges is to foster a sense of responsibility for global dilemmas and issues. World issues can be connected and woven into a curricular framework from a vast array of scholarly sources such as those outlined by Diaz, Massiallas, and Kanthopoulos (1999) in their text, *Global Perspective for Educators*. Selected topics include dilemmas surrounding drought, human rights, population, environmental protection, and health. The study of human rights, for example, offers students the opportunity to compare and contrast their own perceptions of human rights versus those from other countries. Inherent to this topic is the responsibility of national governments to assure adequate nutrition and a standard quality of daily life for all citizens. Lastly, topics developed around environmental and protection issues lead to examination of the processes of human activity such as over-population, food production, and energy usages that cause pollution and global warming.

As an instructional method, problem-based learning (PBL) can guide examination of pre-determined world issues and concepts (Bruner, 1960). Curriculum researchers suggest that PBL expands the transfer of concepts to new problems and enhances intrinsic interest in subject matter (Huges, 1995). The case method is an ideal medium for presenting topics because it compels students to understand and apply theory rather than receive it passively (Silverman, Welty, & Lyon, 1992). Using an adaptation of the Biological Science Curriculum Study (BSCS) model, case studies addressing specific world issues can be written by instructors and organized within five sequential stages as a class project:

1. *Engage*: Distribute copies of case study to participants in both sites. Students gain motivation to examine case study issues in their home classrooms while beginning to make connections between what they know about pertinent issues and why they are worthy of exploration.

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2. *Explore*: Students are directly involved with case study dilemmas. They collaborate to develop a foundation of common experience. Using the Internet as a tool, students investigate self selected issues as related to the case study.

3. *Explain*: Students generate questions and answers for their distant partners that pertain to case study dilemmas.

4. *Elaborate*: Students receive responses and expand on new ideas, make connections to related concepts, and apply new understandings to the immediate environment.

5. *Evaluate*: Classroom facilitation of an on-going diagnostic process to determine if students acquire understanding of new concepts and knowledge.

Defining, specifically, how computer technology is utilized to serve virtual collaborations is an essential component of planning. Diverging views between educators can lead to conflicting expectations, approaches to implementing technology, and criteria for evaluating its impact, all of which can create barriers. While computer technology has potential to sustain long term collaborations, turning it into reality between national systems is a complex task. The key determinant of success is not the number of computers purchased or cables installed, but rather how virtual collaborations are defined, the available support and preparation of participating instructors, the design of a curricular framework, and careful attention to a common language of communication. For planning purposes the criteria for language use must be established by participants at the onset of collaboration and in respect to the international environment within which they operate.

### **International Student Teaching Options: Themes and Insights**

National efforts to globalize United States' institutions of higher education correspond with recognition of international student teaching as a vital study abroad experience for some teacher candidates. In part the inception of international student teaching has been inspired by the steady nationwide growth of study abroad and international faculty exchange programs. In the late 1940s the Fulbright Program initiated short to long term teacher and professor exchanges. The UNESCO and Peace Corps followed with establishment of international exchanges and volunteer opportunities for educators as well as individuals in a variety of other professions. These programs provided initiative for universities and colleges that currently sanction study abroad as a viable component of the undergraduate experience. Leading student destinations have been the nations of Western Europe, such as the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, and France. Recent trends indicate that the share of students in Europe has fallen by eighteen percent and those going to Latin American countries have more than doubled, from seven to fifteen percent (Zachrisson, 2001).

International student teaching experiences can be defined within the general

landscape of study abroad programming. In the 1980s two models were launched in a variety of teacher education programs. Several institutions in the Midwest developed international student teaching options in English-speaking nations. Indiana University, Northern Illinois University, and Central Michigan University exemplify this model given their long standing programs in countries such as England, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and Belize. They also collaborate with international American schools in various nations that utilize English as the primary language of instruction (Kuechle, O'Brien, & Ferguson, 1995). This model requires partial completion of residency in United States settings before student teachers embark on eight to twelve weeks of international experience.

Various other teacher education institutions joined consortiums and/or developed partnerships with host country schools. These relationships typically involve international consortiums with United States universities in other nations and/or partnerships with individual K-12 schools in other countries. Student teachers are placed in one of three types of schools: Department of Defense K-12 Schools, United States Department of State American Overseas Schools, and public schools. The Department of Defense Schools located in Europe, Asia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Panama, and Cuba serve children of military families. As a global model of American education, the United States Department of State American Overseas Schools are private institutions primarily serving diplomatic families. These schools are typically located near or in United States embassies and use English along with at least one host country language for instructional purposes. Host nation public schools represent the third option for placement of student teachers. These schools serve local children using their primary language for instructional purposes.

Many studies have highlighted positive effects of international student teaching experiences in terms of growth in both personal and professional dimensions (Baker, 1985; Mahan & Stachowski, 1985; Vall & Tennison, 1991). The focus of these studies examined student teachers' personal reflections, their program evaluations, and the perceptions of assigned host educators (Clement & Outlaw, 2002; Mahon & Cushner, 2002; Stachowski, Richardson, & Henderson, 2003). Findings suggested that as a result of completion of residency requirements in international settings, teacher candidates are more accepting of people who differ from themselves; are aware of significant intercultural contributions to modern life; are more frequent and active participants in internationally oriented activities, both politically and culturally; and are supportive of policies promoting the free exchange of ideas, goods, and people among diverse nations (Wheeler, 1985).

Other scholars have detailed the importance of acquiring competency for instructing children in dual language classrooms and for diversity issues in educational settings (Mahan, 1985; Mahan & Stachowski, 1990). Thomlinson (1991) suggested that international student teaching experiences decrease ethnocentrism among teacher candidates while increasing awareness of other cultures. He reported that participants' appreciation for other cultures was significantly in-

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creased, while stereotypes of host countries greatly decreased. Open-mindedness toward other cultures and respect for diversity were key areas of growth. Participants' developing consciousness of their own cultures, customs, policies, and practices in the United States was also noted.

A study conducted by Mahon and Cushner (2000) revealed that ethnic minority students and others who lack economic resources represent less than 10 percent of teacher candidates in international settings. Cost was cited as a major deciding factor for this student population. Mahon and Cushner note that while student loans are readily available, the mechanisms for financial support of study abroad options are not clearly articulated. As a result students with limited financial resources are least likely to participate in international student teaching opportunities. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of institutions of higher education to ensure that all qualified prospective candidates receive equitable opportunities for international student teaching assignments.

My responsibilities as a teacher educator and researcher have involved ongoing collaborations with various partner schools in Guatemala and Costa Rica. Over a seven year period I have served as a student-teacher supervisor, director of a summer study abroad program, and classroom-based researcher in Central American schools. As a university supervisor in international sites I assist student teachers in timely completion of program requirements and serve as the contact for coordination of classroom placements. In this capacity I am responsible for orienting student teachers in preparation of international experiences as well as assisting with transitions to living and teaching in Guatemala and Costa Rica.

Principal responsibilities in international sites include placement of student-teachers, orientation to school settings, ongoing monitoring of progress, and support with completion of university program requirements. Mentor teachers accept primary responsibility for classroom supervision and evaluation. They serve as coaches of reflective practice and provide assistance from planning lessons to assessing students. Mentor teachers also collaborate with their student teachers in completion of university required midterm and final evaluations, narrative statements, and exit interviews.

Implications of a case study that I conducted of six student teachers in international settings suggested that participants were continually encouraged to search for new insights in the complexity of situations they faced as novice teachers (Roberts, 2006). Participants acquired an ability to internationalize their pedagogical foundations by drawing upon lessons learned in home environments as a starting point rather than as predetermined pedagogical norms. They noted that some aspects of teaching were universal such as classroom management and administrative procedures. Participants compared previous field experiences in the United States with student teaching in Central American settings to utilize the best from both. Oftentimes in the Guatemalan and Costa Rican settings there were limited resource materials available. As a result participants were given a great deal of

responsibility for decision making and preparation of curriculum. Accordingly participants reported increased competency and creativity for curricular planning and delivery of instruction. They displayed skills and characteristics documented by Hammer (1987, p. 76) as essential elements of intercultural effectiveness: perceptiveness; display of respect; tolerance for ambiguity; flexibility toward ideas of others; listening and accurate perceptions of the needs of others; trust; friendliness and cooperation; calmness and self-control when confronted by obstacles; and the ability to adjust to different cultures and societal systems.

In some instances participants became frustrated when they could not communicate in English or when their initial fluency in Spanish was limited. Participants worked through frustrations by journaling about action plans in which they identified areas for improvement. This process prompted frequent reflection and analyses on both personal and professional levels. Because they had to deal with cultural and linguistic immersion as well as professional immersion, their journal entries often highlighted exhaustion, uncertainties, and elation. In most cases they described these elements as treks through the natural peaks and valleys of becoming novice teachers.

Journaling also helped participants recognize their classroom responsibilities and commitment to becoming globally competent citizens. In this regard the notion of language awareness played an important role in the ability and inability to foster efficacy in professional decision making. Donmall (1985) defines language awareness involving “a person’s sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in everyday life” (p. 7). Participants were engaged in using English as an international language which was very distinct and different from using English for instructional purposes in United States classrooms. In this unique role participants were unprepared for the realization that their use of English had a profound impact on students. Prior to the international student teaching semester they had not contemplated that English as the global language of choice has many varieties other than the accepted norms of ESL or Standard English in the United States. English used for instructional purposes had to be molded to meet specific contexts or needs of Guatemalan and Costa Rican classrooms.

Participant dilemmas stemming from miscommunication were often caused by two assumptions. They noted that a strong command of English grammar, lexis, and phonology was necessary to facilitate communication with students using English as an international language, but this was not sufficient. At times, participants lacked awareness for using English as a global language. Exposure to a foundation of English as an international language was not included with pre-departure orientations nor was it part of the university sequence of required professional development courses. According to Smith and Bisazza (1982) the assumption that non-native students of English will automatically comprehend fluent native speakers is problematic. Likewise, these scholars note that native speakers typically struggle with using and understanding English spoken as an international language by non-native speakers.

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The importance of community building was a reoccurring and significant theme among all participants. Initially a sense of community membership provided strength and connection for participants who might have become isolated otherwise. More importantly, community membership whether within the schools and/or local organizations served as support systems for participants to learn more about themselves, the host communities in which they lived, and their classroom placements. Community helped participants link to local and mainstream Guatemalan and/or Costa Rican structures which in turn prompted fundamental changes in their attitudes and world views. Through encounters with those who developed under different conditions and worldviews, they reflected—as a group of likeminded individuals—on personal values and home societies in a new light. This process led to global competency in terms of a newly found conception of and commitment to world dilemmas along with increased participation in local, national, and international affairs.

Beyond this, the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teacher candidates gained from completion of residency requirements in international settings were multifaceted. Dispelling myths and replacing misinformation with knowledge and understanding were some of the benefits. A developed appreciation of other cultures and the ability to effectively interact with different people within their sphere of living and thinking were significant outcomes. Additional effects included increased levels of awareness of the United States and host nation cultures, newly found commitment for ongoing study of a second language, awareness of global dilemmas, a foundation of world geography and history, and a level of confidence as well as ability to adapt.

The placement of student teachers in international settings involves the efforts and cooperation of many people; administrators and teacher education faculty, college/university staff members, students and their parents, educational authorities, advisors, and international hosts. Five areas of consideration are offered for planning and sustaining options. They are based on a review of literature and the respective case study research findings (Roberts, 2005):

*1. Pre-Departure Orientation:* Prospective students participate in an extensive orientation program prior to departure, offered as a required course, staggered orientation sessions and/or a combination of both options. If possible it should be developed in collaboration with host school principals and/or mentor teachers. Through discussion or self-study, prospective students should gain a foundation of the geography, history, language, cultures, beliefs, and customs of the host country. Emphases on the importance of establishing a sense of membership in a community along with an introduction to life as a foreigner are also elements for consideration. Additional dimensions include a foundation of the host nation's educational system including the roles of public and private schools, along with general information of how the host school fits into the national system of education. Lastly, exposure to a foundation for the use of English in international settings is beneficial. Generally, this foundation is not adequately addressed in the fields of EFL, ESL, and literacy education.

*2. Funding:* The mechanisms for financial support of study abroad are not consistently

articulated across college and university campuses. Faculty should investigate both internal and external sources to ensure sustainability of prospective programs.

*3. Language and Service Requirements:* Beyond regular university program requirements, student teachers in international settings should be expected to complete an ongoing service project and 15 to 30 hours of language study of the host country's primary language. Specific details and goals of this requirement should be developed in collaboration with host school administrations.

*4. Program Evaluation:* There is minimal research on the effects of international student teaching experiences and their impact on the practices of participants who return to teach in United States classrooms. Provision of follow-up evaluations and studies of the transfer of knowledge, skills, and dispositions once participants are employed is needed to inform the continual growth of respective international student teaching programs and to contribute to the broader national discourse.

*5. Direct Involvement of Permanent Faculty:* The majority of United States international student teaching programs are designed with on site supervision. The involvement of faculty supervisors from respective home institutions, however, permits continuity between clinical experiences at home and internationally, encourages collaborative relationships between home institutions and host partner schools, and fosters professional development of faculty who typically return to campus with renewed vision for the integration of international programming in teacher education.

The sustained success of international student teaching programming is dependent on professional development of faculty and institutional support. Teacher educators require a knowledge base and experience in international practices before they can impart it to their students. Opportunities such as workshops and seminars, sabbaticals in other countries, study tours, and participation in associations and organizations that promote global perspectives add valuable insight into faculty decisions regarding international student teaching programs. Institutional commitment should include support of a college-wide international committee for identifying and utilizing resources, as well as developing links with organizations in other countries to encourage faculty, administrator, and student exchanges. Beyond this it is essential that an appointed college-wide committee continually examine impediments to growth in the processes of internationalizing curriculum and to the definition of internationalization in teacher education.

## **Conclusion**

Teacher educators face difficulties in creating structures and activities and finding the time, energy, and financial resources to promote a deep level of understanding for world dilemmas and events. To this extent the seriousness of internationalizing curriculum deserves attention on equal footing with other program elements of teacher education for continual refinement, evaluation of goals, and ongoing modification of procedures. Accordingly the sustained suc-

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cesses of internationalizing teacher education are dependent on the vision of associated faculty. Perhaps involvement should not extend to all members; yet it is important to note that faculties of teacher education have barely begun to tap the potential for the preparation of prospective teachers as globally competent individuals and educators.

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